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PROSPECTUS

OF THE

COMPANION & WEEKLY MISCELLANY.

As this work in all probability will fall into the hands of many who have not before seen the Prospectus, and as future events may render reference thereto necessary, we have thought proper to prefix it to the first number.

THE author of the Pursuits of Literature, has remarked, that "Literature, well or ill conducted, is the great engine, by which, all civilized states must ultimately be supported or overthrown:" and it is to be regretted, that an observation of such importance, founded in solid reason, and supported by experience, should not have been more attended to in this extensive and prosperous country, which agriculture and commerce have already made so opulent. European and Asiatic luxuries, when within our reach, have been seized with avidity, have taken deep root, and spread their branches far and wide; yet Literature, not only seems to be a plant of tardy growth, but its culture has been sadly neglected; and, from the few wild blossoms of promise which it bore, but little fruit has ripened, while the tree still remains sickly, and more than ever requires assistance and protection.

The Port-folio, indeed, is a work that would do honor to any country; its intrinsic excellence, and judicious management, entitle its Editor to the highest praise; already has it excited a laudable spirit of emulation among the most respectable youth within the sphere of its immediate influence; and if ever the people of this country should be as ambitious to rival others in learning as they are in commerce, to the Port-folio must be given the credit of eliciting the first spark, and leading the van of what ever polite and elegant writings the American presses may produce. Excepting this, and one or two magazines, if we search through the United States, our expectations must end in disappointment, for surely, no adequate gratification can be found in those angry political discussions,

and scurrilous invectives, with which the news-papers so abundantly teem; in which it should seem that little else is intended, as certainly little else is effected, than keeping alive and diffusing the seeds of party violence, so destructive to friendly confidence and social intercourse.

In the public prints of other countries, some portion has generally been allotted to employ the studious and divert the gay; and many, whose name and literary honors fame has delivered to posterity, began their career anonymously in a magazine or news-paper. Though our news-papers cannot spare one of their columns for such compositions with constant regularity, yet other modes of publication are in our power, and surely, it cannot be thought too soon to make the trial: that it has not been made before, must be rather from a want of resolution than abilities; yet what real ground of apprehension exists, is difficult to tell, for where there are few authors there can be little to fear from the enmity of rivalry, or to dread from criticism; the worst that can happen, is to slide quietly into oblivion; while on the other hand, it is possible that a moderate portion of encouragement may produce more vigorous efforts, induce others to follow the example, and call into action many latent sparks of genius which now lie dormant.

Influenced by these considerations, and encouraged by the assurance of assistance from a few friends, MR. EDWARD EASY has at last determined to venture forth as the Editor of a periodical paper in this city. His leisure, his turn of mind, and habits of reading, induce him to believe himself in some measure qualified for the task. His object is not pecuniary recompence; nor does he expect to be distinguished as a writer: in this attempt, he presumes not to set his talents in competition with his illustrious predecessors, but humbly to tread in their footsteps, to em-

ploy his time in innocent amusement and endeavours to be useful, cheered by the hope of catching a gleam of their radiance to light him on his way.

The subjects proposed to be treated of in this paper, will, in imitation of other periodical works, be frequently varied, and often turn

"From grave to gay, from lively to severe."

He will sometimes send imagination forth to try if she can find what may amuse the serious and relax the busy with harmless merriment, and sometimes he will endeavour to detain the volatile and thoughtless, by exciting and describing those finer sensibilities and feelings of the soul, which, when properly directed, are the pride, the boast of human nature, and the purest sources of genuine virtue and happiness: But, while he gives the tear and the sigh, in sympathy with those whose spirit is bowed down by affliction, he will ever avoid the hacknied cant, and ridiculous whining which characterizes the sickly sensibility of modern novels; and, when he indulges the sallies of sportive humour, he will never transgress the bounds of decency, or offend the chastest ear by indelicate allusions.

That vice should be scourged with the rod of satire, and folly painted in appropriate colours of ridicule, is sanctioned by the practice of the wise and good in all ages: their example he will be justified in following to its utmost extent, and this, not only as it respects the crimes and follies which are common to our general nature, but also those which are occasional and local; for vice has its incidental and peculiar modifications, as well as virtue; and folly often prides herself in the fantastic trappings of eccentricity: but nothing shall ever be suffered to appear, which tends to gratify personal malignity; or point the finger of scorn to injure the peace of families, or the feelings of an individual.

Religious and political controversy, will never make any part of his lucubrations; and the great fundamental principles of Christian morality, which furnish the only just rules to direct our conduct through life, though they ought never to be neglected, yet he thinks they are better en-

trusted to those whose lives are devoted to sacred studies and ecclesiastical functions; while he cannot do better than point out the purest sources of religious knowledge, and recommend the perusal of those works, whose author's talents and learning actuated by the worthiest motives, have been most successfully exerted. But the smaller duties, the decencies, the gentle courtesies of life, which form the outworks, and in which a breach cannot be made without endangering the greater virtues, it shall be his province to guard as a faithful centinel, and never fail to sound the alarm when either an open or insidious foe approaches.

In enumerating the various subjects which still afford such ample materials for a work of this nature, the editor wishes to be understood as rather having stated what such means might accomplish in abler hands, than what he dares to promise for himself; he can exert all the abilities he possesses in the attempt, but he relies much on the assistance of his friends, and those who are friendly to the undertaking; he earnestly solicits the aid of all who have leisure and inclination to engage in the same cause, and will pay respectful attention to every communication he may receive, reserving to himself the absolute right of accepting or rejecting as he shall think proper, but at the same time he pledges himself, to act in all such cases, according to the best of his judgment, and to decide with candor and impartiality.

CONDITIONS.

The COMPANION & WEEKLY MISCELLANY will be printed on a good Demy Paper, and neat Type (of which this number is a specimen)—Each number to contain eight Quarto pages.... It will be published every Saturday.... And at the end of every year, a handsome Title Page and Table of Contents for the volume will be given.

City Subscribers will be served regularly on the days of publication—those at a distance will have their papers forwarded by Post, or otherwise, as directed:—always at their own expense.

The charge *Three Dollars* per annum, to be paid half-yearly in advance.

Proposals are left at the Coffee-House and different Book-Stores, &c. for the reception of Signatures, also at the Office of COLE & HEWES, Publishers, 192 Market-street—where communications (*post paid*) to the Editor will be thankfully received.